

THE COLUMBUS-ATHENS SCHWEITZER FELLOWS PROGRAM

Purpose: To facilitate service projects to benefit the Columbus and Athens communities, and simultaneously develop emerging professionals who have the skills to address unmet health-related needs throughout their careers.

THE ALBERT
SCHWEITZER
FELLOWSHIP®
*Addressing Health Disparities
by Developing Leaders in Service*

LiFE Sports: See Better, Learn Better

Introduction

Roughly 80 percent of what a child learns in school is presented visually. It has also been found that over 60% of children in Individualized Education Programs have vision disorders that could be related to challenges in school. Kids become used to how they are seeing and may not tell parents and teachers that something isn't right.

There is a great need to teach kids about their vision and screen those who need immediate attention.



Population

LiFE (Learning in Fitness and Education) Sports Camp, a partnership between OSU Athletics and the College of Social Work, is a free summer camp for disadvantaged youth in central Ohio. Of the 600 camp participants, 78% attend Columbus City Schools, 84% are African American, and over 55% are living at or below the poverty line. Most of these kids experience poor health outcomes due to age, race, and socioeconomic status.

Project

Vision screens were conducted at the camp and education programs were delivered to elementary school students.

- Vision Screening - performed and referral letters were sent home with children requiring more immediate visual attention
- Applied the Ohio Optometric Association's RealEyes curriculum to educate the children about vision and its importance in learning, eye health and safety, and the importance of routine vision examinations
- Presented the RealEyes program and other material in classrooms throughout the school year



Impact

- Screened 305 campers and referred 127 kids for full eye exams
- Presented RealEyes and other material to 25 elementary classrooms totaling 1,322 kids
- Collaborated with 13 Optometry students and 5 faculty for vision screenings



The Future

- **Sustainability**- Optometry Students will continue the screenings for 2015 and beyond. They will be trained to present RealEyes and additional content
- **Expansion**- Curriculum will be used in after school programs in Columbus and as part of the Afterschool Allstars program in Toledo
- **Development**- Education on the importance of eye health and safety targeted to the underserved adolescent population in the Columbus area



Elizabeth
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College of
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“Start early to instill in your students awareness that they are on this earth to help and serve others; that is as important to pass on to them as knowledge.”

—Albert Schweitzer, PhD, MD


THE OHIO STATE
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